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FAMILIES can look forward to a treasure of a show this week as Banbury Town Hall turns into a gigantic pirate ship.

A bold new adaptation of *Treasure Island* by Cherwell Theatre Company will take audiences on a swashbuckling adventure from now until Sunday.

Professional actors will be joined by talented youngsters who have helped to write and develop the pantomime.

Director Tristan Pate said: "We wanted to combine the magic of a traditional panto with something new, inventive and interactive."

Tickets are £10 and £8 concessions. See cherwelltheatrecompany.co.uk

Pictured from left are Elly Henshaw, Orla Dempsey-Clark, Elliott Warner-Drew, Jess Jackson, Abbie Constable, Ella Wilton and Simon Grey.

## Pirates set to invade Town Hall



# 200 JOBS AT F1 TEAM FACE AXE

Hannah Somerville  
hsomerville@nqo.com

MORE than 200 jobs hang in the balance after the Manor Formula 1 team collapsed into administration after failing to secure fresh investment.

The team, which is based in Chalker Way on the outskirts of Banbury, is unlikely to feature in the upcoming season after Stephen Fitzpatrick called in administrator FRP Advisory.

It has said that while no redundancies have been made yet at the 212-employee firm, the ongoing staff position is "dependent on whether new investment can be secured".

Staff at the Banbury factory were told on Friday morning about the move which took place as result of parent company Just Racing Serves Ltd being put into administration.

In October 2014, the team was saved from a similar fate after going into administration in October, with Mr Fitzpatrick stepping in just days before the season started.

Last week, Geoff Rowley, joint administrator and partner at FRP Advisory, said: "The team has made significant



Manor F1 Team's Rio Haryanto during mid season testing at Silverstone Circuit, Towcester. Picture: Press Association

progress under its new ownership since the start of 2015.

"But the position remains that operating a F1 team requires significant ongoing investment."

"During recent months the management team has worked tirelessly to bring new investment to secure its long-term future, but regrettably has been unable to do so."

Banbury Town Council leader Kieron Mallon said: "This is obviously a blow for the town."

"Manor has been in this position before and sponsors have come forward,

and we hope that a stable sponsor can be found again.

"The fact that Banbury has less than one per cent of unemployment means that if some are lost permanently we can hopefully soften the blow."

"Banbury being a hub for the motor-sport industries and hi-tech jobs, we hope that if a solution can't be found the staff can be redeployed in similar ways in and around the Banbury area."

Former show cars from the collapsed F1 team Marussia's factory in Overthorpe Road were sold off at auction for a total of £106,000 in December 2014.

The team, first known as Manor Grand Prix, had ceased trading in November.

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# School absence rates soaring

Education chief could be called in after 202,000 academic days are missed

**Luke Sproule**  
lsproule@nqo.com

A TOP education boss with the power to intervene in underperforming schools could be asked to step in to fight absence rates.

Banbury Academy had the highest persistent absence rate in Oxfordshire as county secondary school pupils missed a combined total of 202,000 days in the autumn and spring terms of the last academic year – the most recent period figures are available for.

In this time 4,319 pupils – 13.9 per cent – were classed as being persistently absent, meaning they missed at least 10 per cent of classes.

This was above the national average of 12.3 per cent, with Banbury Academy's figure standing at 26 per cent, meaning a quarter of all students at the school were persistently absent.

Principal Sylvia Thomas, who joined the school in September, said she had since successfully tackled the problem. She said: "We have had a huge focus on it and we have got it down to 17 per cent and looking to get it down to 12 per cent by the end of the year."

"We focus on having conversations with parents."

"We have quite a large group of Eastern European parents who

Banbury Academy had the highest absence rate in the county; right, regional schools commissioner Martin Post



they were doing to address the problem. The matter was also raised with headteachers and school governing bodies over the summer.

"We very much hope to see an improvement in absence rates as a result of this action, but if there is no improvement then there may be a case for the schools commissioner – as the appointed academies regulator – to step in."

The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board is also examining the issue of persistent absences and will be reviewing the problem. The vast majority of secondary schools in Oxfordshire are now academies and are free from local authority control. As a result Mr Post is responsible for maintaining standards and stepping in if they drop.

Oxford University education expert and county councillor Professor John Howson said the regional schools commissioner should be involved immediately, adding: "The local authority does not have the handle on the schools that it used to."

have not been used to the need for attendance to be a high priority.

"It is about having one-on-ones with parents – that has made a huge difference."

"The other strand is providing an environment that children want to come into."

"If you miss large numbers of lessons you are just not getting the building blocks of your learning."

The equivalent of 38,000 school days were missed due to unauthor-

ised absences – such as parents taking children on holiday without permission.

The remaining 164,000 were authorised – such as illness.

Last year we reported that in 2014/15, four per cent of primary and second students were classed as being 'persistently absent' although this was the whole academic year and the threshold was 15 per cent of their total lessons missed.

Oxfordshire County Council cabi-

net member for education Steve Harrod said the issue may require regional schools commissioner Martin Post to step in.

He said: "If we want attainment to continue to improve in Oxfordshire secondary schools, those schools need to tackle this as a priority."

"The council has already written to schools offering to work with them to address the underlying causes of persistent absence, and many responded to set out what



## Oxfordshire's health and care services: The Big Consultation



### We need to know your views

The NHS in Oxfordshire is launching 'The Big Health and Care Consultation' to ask you what you think about possible changes to some healthcare services in the county.

- changing the way we use our hospital beds and bringing care closer to home in Oxfordshire
- planned care at the Horton General in Banbury includes tests and treatment planned in advance and not urgent or emergency care
- acute stroke services in Oxfordshire

We will be holding consultation events across the county. These events are on a first come first served basis where you will be able to sit round a table to talk to clinicians and senior NHS experts and share your views about these proposals. Places will be limited according to venue size, so please book to attend. The events will be held on the following dates:

The proposals affect acute hospital services (*acute hospitals provide a wide range of specialist care and treatment including surgery, medical care, emergency care and tests*), specifically:

- critical care at the Horton General which helps people with life-threatening or very serious injuries and illnesses
- maternity services including obstetrics, Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) and emergency gynaecology surgery in North Oxfordshire

### Dates are shown below:

Thursday 26 January, 7pm – 9pm in Banbury  
Thursday 2 February, 2pm – 4pm in Chipping Norton  
Tuesday 7 February, 3pm – 5pm in Wantage  
Thursday 9 February, 7pm – 9pm in Oxford

Monday 13 February, 10am – 12pm in Didcot  
Thursday 16 February, 6pm – 8pm in Witney  
Tuesday 21 February, 3pm – 5pm in Bicester  
Monday 27 February, 10.30am – 12.30pm in Brackley

Thursday 2 March, 8pm – 10pm in Henley  
Monday 6 March, 8pm – 10pm in Wallingford  
Thursday 16 March, 7pm – 9pm in Banbury  
Thursday 23 March, 6.30pm – 8.30pm in Abingdon

The consultation will launch on Monday 16 January 2017. You will be able to read more about the proposals on our website [www.oxonhealthcarentransformation.nhs.uk](http://www.oxonhealthcarentransformation.nhs.uk) or pick up more information at your GP practice.

If you would like to: • attend any of the events and book your place to receive the full workshop details, including venues • receive a printed copy of the consultation document or survey • or have any queries

**Please ring 01865 334638 or email [csesu.talkinghealth@nhs.net](mailto:csesu.talkinghealth@nhs.net)**



# Ex-cop in plea to owners after dog attack



Paul Pueschel in Banbury High Street, where he was bitten by the dog; left, the injury to his leg



Man spends four days in hospital after bite on his leg becomes infected

**Stuart Rust**  
srust@nqo.com

A RETIRED police officer has called for owners to keep control of their dogs after he was bitten.

Paul Pueschel, 65, was walking along Banbury High Street last month when a dog suddenly ran out and bit him on the ankle. The wound became infected. He spent four days in hospital and still requires treatment.

The father-of-two said he was glad it had not been a child on

the receiving end of the bite. He said: "It should never have happened. I'll get over it, but if that dog had attacked a child it could have had a serious psychological effect."

"I'm a dog lover, but something like this would have probably given a child a fear of dogs for the rest of their life."

Mr Pueschel, a Freemason, was walking home after a lodge meeting in Banbury at about 11.30pm. As he walked past a group of people, the dog ran up and grabbed him around the ankle, wounding his leg.

He described the attack as shocking and extremely painful. Mr Pueschel, who worked for 30 years as a police officer, most of the time with Banbury CID, said

the dog was small but was unable to identify the breed.

He said he managed to shake the dog off and spoke to the owner, who acted surprised by her dog's behaviour but did not offer an apology. He called the police who arrived promptly and spoke to him and the dog's owner.

Mr Pueschel, who lives in Broome Way, Banbury, then went to the Horton General Hospital, where he was referred to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Headington.

At one point, he was admitted as an inpatient at the JR for four days and is still making regular trips to the hospital for treatment to the infection in his ankle. He described hospital staff as 'first class.'

## 'Suicidal' knife woman tasered when arrested

A 'SUICIDAL' woman who was tasered after making threats while clutching a blade has been handed a community order.

Beth Curtin admitted holding a large kitchen knife and making threats after becoming 'agitated' while staying at Banbury Foyer supported housing.

Police officers called to the scene felt threatened as they tried to approach the 19-year-old, Oxford Crown Court was told on Thursday.

Deputy Circuit Judge Patrick Eccles QC told Curtin he believed she did not intend to hurt anyone but warned her she could cause serious injury to others when holding a blade.

He added: "You have a lot to cope with but you can't take out your anger and agitation and unhappiness on other people in

the way that you have been showing."

Defence barrister Claire Fraser said Curtin, of no fixed abode, did not threaten anyone with the knife but intended to self-harm after leaving her bedroom.

Curtin, who has two convictions for three offences, regretted what took place, the barrister added.

She had been sectioned under the Mental Health Act twice in the past year and was diagnosed with a borderline personality disorder last January, Ms Fraser told the court.

The barrister added: "She has had a difficult upbringing. She finds her emotions very difficult to control."

Curtin, who admitted affray on May 23, was handed an 18-month community order, with a 40-day rehabilitation requirement.

## Crossing plan decision due

PLANS for a toucan crossing near a new Waitrose in Banbury could be approved next week.

The new shop on land west of Southam Road is expected to lead to a rise in pedestrians and cyclists crossing the road, Oxfordshire County Council said.

It said a toucan crossing, signal controlled and for the use of both pedestrians and cyclists, would provide 'a safe and convenient crossing point'.

A consultation took place from October 28 to November 27 last year. Only three responses were received, the council said.

Two were objections due to concerns it would slow down traffic. Responding to this, the authority said: "Such delays are considered proportionate."

A decision will be made at a meeting on Thursday, in County Hall, starting at 10am.

## Hear fox hunting talk at curry night

ANIMAL enthusiasts and people interested in the politics of the Hunting with Dogs Act are invited to an informative curry night with Banbury Labour Party.

The event on January 18, will feature guest speaker Jane Russ, pictured, author of *The Hare Book* and *The Fox Book* and chairwoman of the Hare Preservation Trust, who will discuss interesting facts about both animals and the possible ramifications of an appeal of the ban on fox hunting.

All are welcome and guests do not need to be affiliated to a political party. The evening runs from 7pm at The Jaypur in Parsons Street.

Prior booking is essential and its costs £11.50. For more information visit [banburylabour.org](http://banburylabour.org)



## Gifts for children

IT WAS smiles all round for the children at the Horton General Hospital when Morrisons staff handed out gifts for the festive season.

Workers at the nearby superstore put out the gift appeal for the second year running to help give those youngsters in hospital a better Christmas.

Morrisons community champion Emma Boisselle said: "We had lots of customers who donated stuff such as new toys, second hand and lots of things for babies as well."

"We had so much stuff it completely filled our van and we had to do about four or five trips."

"It was great to see all the children's smiles as they were given the presents."

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# Business leaders gear up for awards bonanza

BUSINESS leaders are gathering today for the launch of this year's Oxfordshire Business Awards.

Planning and preparation starts early for the prestigious awards contest, which will conclude with a glittering awards ceremony in the summer.

Today, the organisers of the awards, now in the 23rd year, will meet at Oxford Science Park at 6pm, to announce the awards categories and encourage local firms to compete.

In June last year, management consultants Newton Europe was named Darke & Taylor Business of the Year in the 2016 Oxfordshire Business Awards.

The business management consultancy, based in Kingstons Bagpuize, scored a hat-trick of awards, as it also picked up the Employer of the Year Award and the Large Business Award.

Newton Europe director James Frost said: "It was a fantastic year for the team last year – we were really proud of what we achieved."

More than 400 business leaders and their staff gathered at the awards ceremony in June at the Oxford Thames Four Pillars Hotel in Sandford-on-Thames.

About 300 firms came forward to compete in 15 different categories.

Last year a new Food or Drink Producer of the Year award category was added, sponsored by caterers Oxford Fine Dining.

Three finalists for each category were chosen by judges, and guest speaker for the evening was Sky Sports presenter David Jones.

Awards chairman Paul Lowe said it was a night of celebration for some of Oxfordshire's most prestigious companies, and added it was a 'huge privilege' to be associated with the awards as they went from strength to strength.

Darren Aston, of Witney-based Aston & James office suppliers, said: "We certainly enjoyed the experience, a thoroughly enjoyable evening."

"It was brilliantly planned – I could see a lot of effort goes in to an awards evening of that size and calibre."

The Oxford Times backs the Charity and Community Award, which was won last year by Aspire Oxford, an award-winning employment charity.

Joint chief executive officer Paul Roberts said following the ceremony it was a 'privilege' to receive the award, with all the people helped by the charity having one thing in common, facing a barrier or social exclusion. He added: "This year we are considering entering a different category."

Another winner last year was Simon Biltcliffe, of Bicester-based print firm Webmart. He won The Shaw Gibbs Business Person of the Year.

And the Savills Property Award was won by Bicester Heritage, a centre for historic motoring and aviation.



Newton Europe staff celebrating at last year's Oxfordshire Business Awards

## MP urges patients to record journeys

People are asked to keep track of door-to-door time when visiting JR Hospital

Hannah Somerville  
hsomerville@nqo.com

PEOPLE travelling from North Oxfordshire to the John Radcliffe Hospital are being encouraged to record their overall door-to-door journey time as part of a campaign to protect services at the Horton General Hospital.

Banbury MP Victoria Prentis has met with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and stated that journey times faced by her constituents – including how long it takes to park – must be included in statistics about travel to the JR.

Since October, a downgrade of the Horton's maternity unit has meant expectant mothers deemed 'high-risk' must travel to the JR to give birth.

It also affects women who end up facing complications during delivery at the Horton, who must then be taken to Oxford by ambulance.

In the past, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has said the journey time by ambulance is approximately



Victoria Prentis MP at a demonstration against the downgrade of the Horton General Hospital in late 2016

35 minutes, a strongly disputed figure.

Mrs Prentis said: "Following the downgrade of the Horton maternity unit I remain extremely concerned about travel times to the John Radcliffe."

"The journey can be so unpredictable and parking times must be taken into account."

In the coming weeks a consultation on one half of the 'Oxfordshire Transformation Programme', part of a wider sustainability and transformation plan (STP) that could

reshape the entire NHS in the county, will get under way – specifically looking at services delivered at the Horton and the site's future.

Mrs Prentis said: "These variables need to be considered ahead of the consultation on NHS services in Oxfordshire."

"It would be brilliant if as many people as possible get involved in the campaign to give us a good indication of true journey times from Banbury."

In a statement issued this week, Oxfordshire CCG said: "The CCG acknowledges the initiative taken by Victoria Prentis MP for Banbury around health journey times, which will be considered alongside other data and information sources."

The campaign is open to anyone travelling from Banbury and the surrounding area to the JR for an appointment or to visit a relative.

It involves filling out a short form about the journey and posting or emailing it to Mrs Prentis's constituency office to be passed on to the CCG.

Anyone travelling is also encouraged to post photographs of themselves leaving and arriving on social media, with their overall travel time, using the hashtag #Banbury2JR.

For a copy of the form email a request to victoria.prentis.mp@parliament.uk

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# Project to link carpenters with local wood

IMAGINE if you could walk into Oxford's new John Lewis store at the Westgate and buy a table made by a city carpenter from trees grown in Oxfordshire. That is the vision behind a new woodland management plan for the whole county.

Forestry charity the Sylva Foundation, based in Long Wittenham, near Didcot, hopes to link carpenters and furniture shops with landowners and conservation groups to

make the best use of every woodland, copse and tree and keep the wildlife happy at the same time.

Sylva's Alistair Yeomans embarked on that mission this month by inviting letting agents from North Oxford Property Services (NOPS) down to plant some trees and also check out the work of the carpenters which the charity hosts at its base making local wood into fine furniture.

Mr Yeomans, a chartered forester, says as much as 46 per cent of the county's woodland is currently unmanaged, meaning the landowner hasn't even surveyed the habitat and decided to leave it to its own natural processes.

But even cutting down trees can be good for some species, like the silver-washed fritillary butterfly which enjoys the dappled shade.

What's more, Sylva's woodland

management plan, nicknamed In a Nutshell, estimates that managing our woodland properly could generate £5.5m in woodfuel and £25m for the joinery and furniture sector.

A total of 13 Oxfordshire environmental groups, including Wild Oxfordshire, the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and BBOWT helped draw up the In a Nutshell report at wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/habitats-and-species



Alistair Yeomans and Debbie Swailes from NOPS, with Hannah George, Alex Studdy, Costa Ioannou and Georgina Passmore

# Mothercare to close as firm shifts focus



Mothercare in Banbury's High Street, which is closing

High Street branch of struggling baby equipment and toys chain will close for good next week

Hannah Somerville  
hsomerville@nqo.com

THE Banbury branch of baby equipment, clothing and toy chain Mothercare has announced it will close next week.

The High Street store will close its doors for the last time next Saturday

after the conclusion of its January sale and is not set to relocate anywhere else in the town.

It is not known how many jobs will be affected but spokeswoman Noella Dixon said the move was part of a broader shift in the company's focus.

She said: "Mothercare Banbury will close on Saturday, January 21, 2017.

"We will be emailing our customers in the local area to advise of the changes and provide details of their nearest store.

"We greatly value all our customers in the area and would like to thank them for their continued loyalty and support

for Mothercare. Whilst we regret the closure of the store, it is part of a larger transformation plan for our business."

In November last year, the retailer announced a major loss in its home market, reporting an £800,000 pre-tax loss in the first half of the year and £8.8m debts overall.

The firm is also reportedly planning to become a digitally-led business and is investing in its store layout and global supply chain.

Parents and parents-to-be looking to buy supplies can try the Argos at Banbury Retail Park or Merry Go Round in Adderbury.

# Community groups receive funding aid

THOUSANDS of pounds worth of support has been doled out to community groups in the Banbury area courtesy of the Midcounties Co-Operative.

The grant forms part of a community fund which awards cash to worthy recipients throughout the company's trading areas, including Banbury.

A total of £1,744 has been handed to those in charge of Ellen Hinde Hall, a historic building named after the only daughter of the first headmaster of Bloxham School and given over to the Bloxham community in 1943.

It will pay for the replacement of water pipes at the facility, which hosts a range of local groups.

Elsewhere, the Sunrise Multicultural Project, which works with disadvantaged ethnic minority groups in Banbury, will use its £1,400 to

fund physical activity sessions.

Finally, Bodicote Sports Youth Football Club will use its £1,000 donation to buy a new machine to paint white lines on its pitches.

Stuart Newman, leadership team ambassador for the Midcounties Co-operative in Banbury, said: "These donations have been provided following successful applications to our community fund and we're looking forward to accepting more entries when our next funding period opens.

"Ellen Hinde Hall, the Sunrise Multicultural Project and Bodicote Sports Youth Football Club are all organisations that offer benefits to the community not only in terms of promoting physical wellbeing but by providing local people with a space in which to socialise.

"We're pleased to support the great work these groups do by providing this funding."

# Fears over 'isolation' of aged

CONCERNS that closures of day centres across the county will leave elderly people isolated and priced out of care will be put to the county council's cabinet.

The council's scrutiny committee last week raised issues over what proposed new models for daytime support services would mean for the county's most vulnerably elderly.

Volunteer Link-Up, an organisation in West Oxfordshire which provides a range of

services, could lose its £30,000 county council grant.

Eynsham councillor Charles Mathew said: "The council is making it more and more difficult for elderly people to exist."

It was revealed at the committee meeting that without subsidy a daily visit to a day centre could soon cost £40.

A decision will be made at a later date.

# Call for snow wardens as temperatures plummet

VOLUNTEER 'snow wardens' to keep roads free of snow and ice are being sought by Banbury Town Council after temperatures plunged last week.

A weather warning was issued by the Met Office last Thursday ahead of the coldest temperatures in England's winter so far, with -8C recorded in South Oxfordshire.

In Banbury, the council is extending a snow warden scheme which has been running since 2013, but rarely

used in practice. The project sees community-minded men and women organise the gritting of roads and pavements in areas where they live.

Businesses in Banbury are also asked to get involved by gritting the roads and pavements in front of their premises.

About 80 wardens are in place but have rarely been called into action because of a succession of mild winters.

This year ice has already

been a problem and more wardens are needed to be on stand-by.

Kieron Mallon, leader of the town council, said: "Snow wardens are valued members of the community. They keep roads, pavements and footpaths safer for everyone throughout the winter – particularly elderly and vulnerable residents who cannot help themselves.

"Wardens help keep the town moving at times when snow and ice could restrict

travel to and from work, schools and shops.

"Councils do their best to keep roads and pavements safe but most people realise they cannot get everywhere instantly – but on-the-spot volunteers can act straight away."

Everything needed by volunteers for the task, as well as training, will be provided by the council.

For more information contact Banbury Town Council on 01295 250340.

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# Students to beat the January blues

College campaign aims to help keep spirits high on campus with activities

Hannah Somerville  
hsomerville@nqo.com

A MONTH-LONG campaign to beat the January blues is under way at Banbury and Bicester College aiming to help students realise their goals and improve wellbeing. The student support team at the campus in Broughton Road launched the series of events and activities to keep students' spirits high.

On Monday, the group of teenagers took part in a session with speaker Kayode Dimali, who is ranked eighth in the world's top 100 most powerful young entrepreneurs. Lianne Davis, student engagement advisor at the college, said: "We wanted to help re-motivate students at this traditionally tricky time of the year and kick-start their learning after the Christmas break.

"Kayode was a fantastic motivational speaker. The energy in the room just soared once he started.

"You could tell how much the



Kayode Dimali, centre, poses for a selfie with students in Banbury

students enjoyed the event from the queue to have selfies taken with him at the end."

Mr Dimali, who has been described as "the smoothest guy on TV", overcame difficulties in his youth in London to graduate from university with a first class degree.

In 2015 he appeared as part of the BBC's Generation X panel, talking about life in the UK ahead of the general election.

He said: "I draw my inspiration and share my takes on life, from my own experiences of being a young person.

"My talks feature lots of interaction so that it feels more like having 150 individual conversa-

tions with separate people. By being here today I want to help prepare people so that they are ready and excited for the year ahead."

Over the next month students will also record their own personal goals on postcards and enter them into a 'box of dreams' for a chance to win prizes.

Student Szymon Zygmunt, 17, said: "Today has really helped me. I always knew what I wanted to do and now I know exactly how to get there. Kayode was so good."

Student Courtney Solomon, 16, said: "Kayode was really good and the talk today was not what I was expecting."



Tutor Lucy Donaghy, Poppy Bannerman, 17, Josh Miles, 19, learning assistant Krone Neal, Rory Thompson, 17, and Gemma Preedy, 16, at the fundraising breakfast club

## Breakfast aid for fire-hit school

STUDENTS at Banbury and Bicester College cooked up a storm to help raise funds after a Bicester school's playground equipment was destroyed.

Last week, students in the college's learning difficulties department donated £30 of their cooking fund to buy ingredients and put on a breakfast club in aid of Bardwell School.

Bardwell, for youngsters with special needs, saw a shed full of bikes, scooters and play equipment burnt to the ground in a New Year's Day arson attack.

A suspect was identified by Thames Valley Police last week, and parents and

the community raised more than £4,000 to help replace the equipment.

College student Poppy Bannerman, 17, was among those serving up bacon sandwiches, tea and coffee at the Banbury campus on Friday.

She said: "We are helping Bardwell because it was dreadful what happened there."

Tutor Lucy Donaghy added: "We were really saddened to hear what had happened. Our students were keen to help and we had fundraisers throughout the week. On Thursday we sent sports equipment over to them."

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3407	Poppy Remembrance x 3	£9.99		
3417	PomPom Dahlias x 3	£11.99		
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4383	Double Flowered Fuchsias x 15	£13.49		
2060	Bumper Begonia Collection x 30	£14.98		
2430	OFFER: Liatris spicata x 40 bulbs Offer limited to one per household.		1 [ ] please tick	£3.95 p&p
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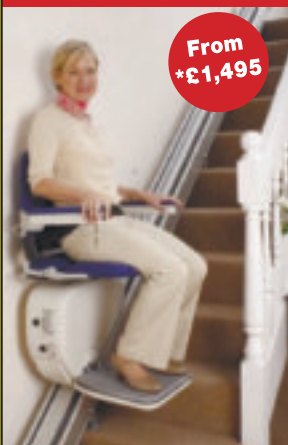
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## Crews' busy festive time

THE festive period may be a time for relaxation, over-indulgence and holidays but for some it is their busiest time of year.

South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) was out in force over Christmas and New Year to make sure everyone remained safe.

The ambulance service recorded that from Christmas Eve to the bank holiday Tuesday it was 11.5 per cent busier than it was in 2015 across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Hampshire.

Its busiest day in the week between Christmas and New Year was Tuesday, with a total of 1,743 incidents attended on that day alone.

Figures for Oxfordshire revealed that in the week leading up to New Year's Day, there was an increase in incidents from 984 in 2015 to 1,058 in 2016.

Michelle Archer, spokeswoman for SCAS, said the 33 per cent increase from 191 incidents in 2015 to 255 in 2016 were because the celebratory night fell on a Saturday. She said the service had received more calls this holiday.

She added: "We had an increase in the number of 111 calls and as a result an additional number of calls were passed on to 999 which required ambulance attendance, which we do not receive on a weekday."



The Emergency Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital; inset, Dr Tony Berendt

# Hospital A&Es hit as crisis worsens

'Deterioration' in waiting times as patients remain in parked ambulances

Hannah Somerville  
hsomerville@nqo.com

HEALTH bosses are urging the public to only go to A&E in an emergency as a worsening winter crisis has put Oxfordshire's hospitals on alert. The second highest level of warning has been in place across the county's hospitals since December 19.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said that on the Tuesday after Christmas, casualty units were the busiest in their history.

The alert in place for Oxfordshire signals 'severe deterioration' in A&E waiting times or a significant lack of beds.

It is also put in place when handovers from the ambulance service are 'significantly compromised', with patients waiting an hour or more in parked ambulances.

A nurse working at Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital, who asked not to be named, said there had been a 'noticeable' build-up during December.

He said: "Christmas Day was

one of the most challenging shifts I have ever had. It tends to be quieter, with only the most serious cases in, but it was extremely challenging.

"Since then pretty much every shift has been difficult. It's not particularly that there are more patients, but the problem has been a lack of flow around the hospital.

"Everything that can be done has been done and the teamwork is amazing.

"When it comes down to the actual job, everybody works extremely hard.

"But unfortunately it's a case of funding and cuts to social care over a period of time."

Patients have reported lengthy waits at A&E departments in Oxford and Banbury.

Dr Tony Berendt, medical director at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Our emergency departments have been under sustained heavy pressure since Christmas, linked to a sharp increase in flu cases, particularly in older people.

"Whilst the situation is still manageable it is important we all try to use emergency departments only for emergencies."

The trust didn't answer all of our questions about the situa-

tion but communications manager Roy Probert said: "It is not unusual for us to be experiencing high demand for our services at this time of year. However, we are seeing a sustained increase in demand for our emergency services, therefore, we decided to remind the people in Oxfordshire to stop and consider all the options available to them before deciding to go to an emergency department."

According to NHS England figures, between December 1 and January 1 a total of 11,792 people have attended A&E at the John Radcliffe and the Horton General hospitals.

This compares to 10,914 in September, 10,576 in August and 10,401 in April.

No information on beds was available for Monday, December 19, the day the alert came into effect, but on the Tuesday a total of 1,039 out of 1,129 trust beds were occupied – a total of 92 per cent, above the 85 per cent recommended by NHS Improvement for the winter period. In recent weeks patients have taken to social media to express their concerns, with Ayshia Heritage reporting a 'very full' JR on December 16 after claiming to have waited six hours for a bed for a relative.

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# Hundreds take on dry challenge



Oxfordshire County Council leader Ian Hudspeth and staff preparing for a gruelling month of abstinence from alcohol

Council is supporting alcohol-free month for health and well-being

**Hannah Somerville**  
hsomerville@nqo.com

HUNDREDS of people in Oxfordshire are now taking part in a month-long new year battle to ditch the booze – and others are being urged to join them.

Staff and elected members of Oxfordshire County Council have joined forces to take part in Dry January and avoid alcohol for 31 days.

Now in its sixth year, the challenge sees national charity Alcohol Concern throw down the gauntlet to drinkers to improve their health and well-being.

County council leader Ian Hudspeth, a regular participant, said he had found previous years 'relatively easier' than 2017, but he expected to be able to pull through.

He said: "Perhaps the biggest challenge is finding different substitute drinks that do have flavour, without having too much sugar. Sometimes people feel obliged to do it for charity but it's a personal challenge for me."

The Dry January challenge encourages people to reassess their relationship with alcohol and get healthier, with many saving money along the way.

Some 12,000 charities – every one registered on the Virgin Money Giving database – are set to benefit from spon-

sorship this year. Mr Hudspeth said: "It's important we all take a break at some stage and it seems like a good opportunity while everybody else is doing it."

"I did it a few years ago and found it very useful, and it did actually mean I cut down my alcohol intake for the rest of the year, and felt better."

"A lot of people think 'Can you really do it?' Of course you can. It's just a question of having a bit of determination."

Following an event hosted in Oxford by Alcohol Concern last month, 47 staff members at the county council signed up to Dry January.

Jackie Wilderspin, the council's public health specialist, said: "After all the Christmas celebrations and festivities it felt like the right time to give myself a break."

"I'm only four days in so it's not really been too challenging so far, but knowing the benefits drinking less alcohol can have – saving money, getting a better night's sleep and generally feeling healthier – will definitely keep me motivated if it gets more difficult."

Firefighters and staff across Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service are also gearing up for an abstemious month.

Rob MacDougall, assistant chief fire officer at Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service, said: "I overindulged at Christmas and have a service fitness test in January, the dreaded bleep test, so Dry January felt like a good way to improve my health and fitness."

## PM's plan to reform mental health care is welcomed

A CHARITY in Oxfordshire is pleased with the Prime Minister's proposal to transform mental health support.

Theresa May last week announced reforms to mental health care in the UK, including further training for teachers, extra support in the workplace and an additional £15m for community care.

Oxfordshire Mind said it was pleased with the PM's plans to address 'everyday injustices' in mental healthcare.

Paul Farmer, chief executive of Mind, helped shape the reforms and, together

with Lord Dennis Stevenson, will be leading a review.

Oxfordshire Mind CEO Dan Knowles said: "Although stigma in mental health has reduced substantially, we all need to work together to ensure it is eradicated."

"Much good work goes on every day, however the need for improved mental health services in Oxfordshire remains a significant challenge."

Mr Knowles said the charity was particularly pleased with the focus on support for schools, the partner-based

approach to mental health in the workplace and further investment in digital mental health.

He said: "Oxfordshire Mind has been a pioneer for over a decade in the delivery of guided self-help and associated services through the TalkingSpace Plus partnership. "Therefore we strongly believe that digital therapy has a role."

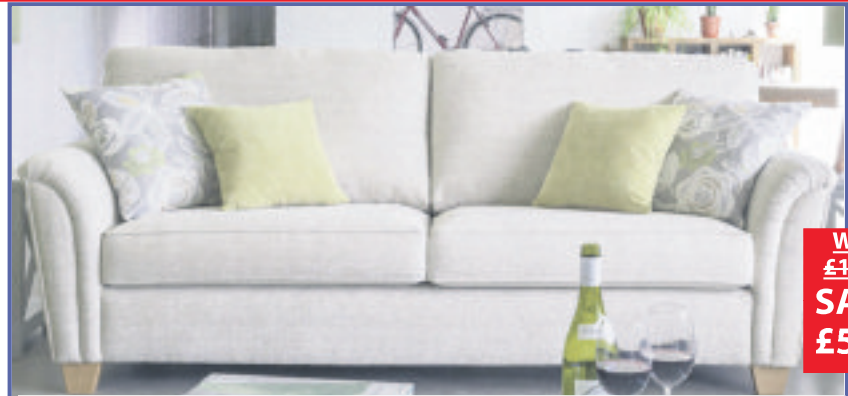
"We also strongly believe it should not replace face-to-face help for those who need it."

For more, visit [oxfordshiremind.org.uk](http://oxfordshiremind.org.uk)

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# Only three fined for fly-tipping

'Selfish' people blighting county despite new powers to give on-the-spot penalties

Georgina Campbell  
gcampbell@nqo.com

'SELFISH and reckless' people are blighting the environment by dumping their waste across Oxfordshire.

That's the message from councillors who are urging the public to properly dispose of their rubbish in the war against fly-tipping.

It comes as new figures reveal just three on-the-spot fines were dished out to culprits in the county last year. This is despite new powers given to councils last May to issue fixed penalty notices between £150 and £400 to fly-tippers.

Oxford City Council leader Bob Price said the problem was the perpetrator had to be caught in the act.

He added: "For us the best way to tackle fly-tipping is prevention rather than cure. And I think by providing facilities for people and industrial companies to get rid of their waste – that is the best way to tackle the problem."

New figures also revealed West Oxfordshire handed out just one £400 notice last year and South Oxfordshire District Council dished out two, although it could not confirm how much they were.

There were however a number of prosecutions against fly-tippers leading to defendants paying fines.



A pile of building waste fly-tipped on Woodeaton Road in Oxford; inset, rubbish dumped at Redbridge Hollow

This is despite thousands of reported incidents across the county including almost 2,000 in Oxford, costing the taxpayer money.

Mr Price added: "Before the powers were introduced we would fine people who had been fly-tipping by going through the courts.

"For that you can gather evidence and speak to witnesses.

"But you have to actually catch the person fly-tipping before you is-

sue a fixed penalty notice, which is obviously a lot harder to do without having someone stationed around different points in the city waiting for it to happen."

Tony Harbour, member for the environment at South Oxfordshire District Council, said fixed penalty notices were used alongside existing powers as an additional deterrent against fly-tipping.

He added: "Fly-tipping is really not worth it, you will get caught, and you will end up paying the price. We live in a beautiful area of the country and we do not want it being blighted by selfish and reckless individuals."

Concerns have previously been raised about an increase in fly-tipping in Oxfordshire due to changes at the county's household waste recycling centres.

From October more control will be handed to private contractors with new charges introduced.

People are set to be charged between £2 and £4 for DIY items such as rubble.

The council currently operates seven sites: Redbridge in Oxford, Dix Pit near Stanton Harcourt, Drayton, Oakley Wood near Wallingford, Alkerton near Banbury and Faringdon Road in Stanford in the Vale.

Oxfordshire County Council has also proposed allowing a 25 per cent cut to opening times – excluding weekends.

To ensure waste is disposed of legally visit the website gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

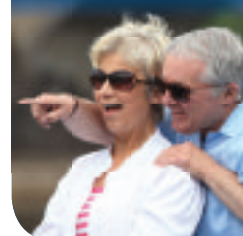
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# Oscars await in La La Land

**LA LA LAND (12A, 128 mins)**  
Musical/Romance/Drama. **Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone, John Legend, Rosemarie DeWitt, JK Simmons. Director: Damien Chazelle**

THE frenzied expectation surrounding writer-director Damien Chazelle's musical love story was deafening before *La La Land* won a record seven Golden Globe awards.

His impeccably crafted follow-up to *Whiplash* is now firmly installed as the frontrunner for glory at next month's Oscars, and already has one trembling hand on the coveted golden statuette for Best Picture and Best Director.

The feverish hype is fully justified.

*La La Land* is a visually sumptuous, unabashedly swooning valentine to the golden age of Hollywood musicals, artfully constructed on a foundation of distinctly modern sensibilities.

Yes, characters burst into catchy songs composed by Justin Hurwitz, with snappy lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, to express their churning emotions, while their bodies tap, pirouette, twist and jive to Mandy Moore's expressive choreography.

Aspiring actress Mia (Emma Stone) works as a barista in between auditions, which repeatedly end in rejection.

On a traffic-jammed Los Angeles freeway, she crosses paths with talented pianist Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), who reveres jazz in its purest form, but is forced to play saccharine standards by restaurant owner Bill (JK Simmons).

"I hate jazz," Mia tells Sebastian after they meet at a party in the Hollywood hills, where they share dreams for the future.

Sebastian is convinced he can spearhead a new appreciation for music until an old classmate, Keith (John Legend), questions his devotion to masters of a

bygone era. While Mia prepares to stage her semi-autobiographical one-woman show *So Long, Boulder City*, Sebastian agrees to play keyboard in Keith's soulless, chart-friendly band The Messengers.

Frustrations between the couple come to a head in a fractious to and fro about artistic integrity.

"Since when do you care so much about being liked?" snarls Mia.

"You're an actress!" Sebastian angrily reminds her, introducing pot to black kettle.

*La La Land* is a perfect marriage of directorial brio, tour-de-force performance and jaw-dropping production design.

Gosling and Stone are individually luminous and electrifying as a double-act in high energy song and dance sequences.

Both are gifted emotionally wrought solos that galvanize Sebastian and Mia's perilously fragile romance.

Chazelle's film is a bitter and sweet confection in equal doses, laced with dry wit and an appreciation for the tug of war between love and career advancement that necessitates painful self-sacrifices for either side to triumph.

**MANCHESTER BY THE SEA (15, 137 mins)** Drama/Romance. **Casey Affleck, Lucas Hedges, Michelle Williams, Kyle Chandler, Gretchen Mol, CJ Wilson, Josh Hamilton. Director: Kenneth Lonergan.**

ANGUISHED silences between members of a fractured Massachusetts family speak volumes about the loss of a son in writer-director Kenneth Lonergan's elegiac drama.

Set in and around the titular coastal community, *Manchester By The Sea* eloquently explores universal themes of grief, guilt and sexual awakening through the eyes of a 40-year-old handyman whose outlook on life is as threadbare and tattered as



Ryan Gosling as Sebastian Wilder and Emma Stone as Mia Dolan in *La La Land* and, below, Michelle Williams as Randi in *Manchester By The Sea*

the winter jacket he wears atop his overalls.

Lonergan sketches his internally conflicted central character with patience and precision, gifting a peach of a role to Casey Affleck, who seems destined to triumph at this year's Oscars for his nuanced, emotionally raw portrayal of a man who has been battered and bruised by the past.

Every close-up of Affleck's eyes, glistening with regret, tug at the heartstrings until the sense of loss and abandonment becomes almost intolerable.

Lonergan's characters frequently say everything with a mournful stare or hesitant attempt at consolation.

## Cake Bookworm

**Welcome To Lagos by Chibundu Onuzo is published in paperback by Faber & Faber, priced £12.99 (ebook £6.99)**

THIS is a brilliantly drawn tragicomic farce about life in Nigeria. Nothing evades Onuzo's biting prose and whipsmart humour. From the allegedly corrupt ministers who run the country, to the BBC journalists covering breaking news, and from the idealistic newspaper editor trying to hold the country to account, to the army officer who would rather be homeless than follow orders, all show the multifaceted humanity of Lagos. The story focuses on five runaways. When they choose an abandoned flat as their squat, it sets off a chain of farcical events that lead to the arrest of school headmasters, a newspaper's offices being burnt down, the death of a minister and the undoing of the Nigerian government. This fantastic novel peels back the beating heart

of a complex, beautiful country.

Well worth reading.

**Dallia by Jason Donald is published in hardback by Jonathan Cape, priced £16.99 (ebook £9.99)**

*Dallia* does for the Home Office what *I, Daniel Blake* did for the Department of Work and Pensions, documenting the effects on an individual of bureaucracy. A young Kenyan woman, enslaved and with her family murdered, claims asylum in Britain and learns that entering the country is only the first part of the fight. Shipped to Scotland and plunged into interviews and restrictions, she faces the violence of her past in settings as inhuman as those she left behind. Author Jason Donald, once a migrant himself, juxtaposes the cultures of Nairobi and Glasgow and has found a story befitting of his empathy. *Dallia* shines a light on the side of the migration story that never makes the news.

**Little Deaths by Emma Flint is published in hardback by Picador, £12.99 (ebook £7.59)**

IT'S comforting to think women accused of murder are tried on evidence, rather than looks or sexual behaviour. But as the Amanda Knox case proves, that's not the case – making Emma Flint's debut novel sharply relevant. Set in 1965, it tells the story of wife and mother Ruth Malone. When her two young children are found dead, her refusal to show grief makes her the prime suspect. Her cocktail waitress job and extra-marital flings condemn her in the eyes of detectives and the public. Watching her is reporter Pete Wonick, who is torn between condemnation and obsession. Newcastle-born author Flint was inspired by the 1965 case of Alice Crimmins, whose brassy looks led to trial by media. The fact that so little has changed since, gives this gripping tale extra poignancy.

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# Oxfordshire Listings

## Events

### THURSDAY

**Film:** Abingdon Health and Wellbeing Centre, Audlett Drive, Abingdon. *A Girl Walks Home at Night*, 101 mins, USA, 2014, Cert 15. Performed by a Farsi-speaking Iranian cast, but shot on location in California, this Amirpour debut film has echos of Vampire, Spaghetti Western, Iranian and Nouvelle Vague genres. 7.45pm. £6. 01235 521976.

**Grove RFC Girls' Rugby:** Grove RFC, Recreation Lane, Grove. Contact rugby union for girls aged 11-18 in three age groups. 7pm. Annual membership £85 after three free sessions. 07970 292322.

**West Oxon Decorative and Fine Arts Society:** Witney Methodist Church, High Street, Witney. The Collections of Napoleon and Josephine at Chateau Malmaison. 7.30pm. £6. 01993 776568.

### FRIDAY

**Crochet for beginners:** Hobbycraft, Lamarsh Road, Oxford. 5pm. £5. 01865 364881.

**Witney Bytomic Taekwondo Classes:** Wood Green School, Woodstock Road, Witney. 7pm. Monthly fees apply. 01844 281888.

### SATURDAY

**Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers:** The Ridgeway, Bury Down Car Park, Harwell. A moderately strenuous 10-mile walk along The Ridgeway via West Ilsley. 10am. Free. 01865 375110.

**Golden Stitches and Gruesome Saints – Opus Anglicanum and the Steeple Aston Cope:** Steeple Aston Village Hall, Fir Lane, Steeple Aston. This talk will include an introduction to opus Anglicanum, the luxurious and skilful embroidered work that earned England international fame during the Middle Ages. It will also introduce new research on the Steeple Aston Cope. 7.30pm. Free. Contributions welcome. 01869 347073.

**Good Old-fashioned Jumble/Nearly New Sale:** All Saints' Community Hall, Roman Place, Didcot. 2pm. 01235 861409.

**Hedgelaying:** Earth Trust, Little Wittenham. A practical, hands-on two days learning to lay a Midland style hedge with expert Clive Leeke. All tools provided. See [www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson) 9.30am. £75. 01865 407792.

**National Art and Design Saturday Club:** Banbury and Bicester College, Broughton Road, Oxford. Free programme for 14-16 year olds. 10am. 0808 168 6626.

**Ramblers walk:** Village car park, Chalgrove. Seven-mile walk via Berrick Salome and Brightwell Baldwin. Possible pub stop at the end. 10am. 01865 891147.

**Recruitment Open Day:** South Central Ambulance Service, 7-8 Talisman Business Park, Bicester. 10am. Free. 01869 365000.

**Table Top and Jumble Sale:** Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary, Old Didcot Road Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. 11am. Buyers entry 50p. 01491 833938.

**The Brain 4 Maths:** Department of Experimental Psychology, Tinbergen Building, South Parks Road, Oxford. We are looking for children aged six, 10 or 14 or students who will start their AS levels in September to take part in research to help us understand the variations in the brain that explain differences in mathematical abilities and achievement. Children must be right-handed, fluent English speakers, and without any known (or suspected) learning, developmental or psychiatric condition. The study involves a safe brain scan using a Magnetic Resonance scanner (1½ hours) and several Maths puzzles and games (three hours). We will

repeat these sessions in 18 or 24 months' time (depending on their stage of education). All participants will receive a voucher to say thank you for taking part. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed. 1pm. Free. 07464 755010.

**Wildlife Photography Walk:** Earth Trust, Little Wittenham. Learn how to capture images of wildlife with guidance from professional photographer Andrew Walmsley. See [earthtrust.org.uk/](http://earthtrust.org.uk/) 8am. £20. 01865 407792.

**Workshop – Roman Capitals by Freddie Quartley:** Stanton St John Village Hall, Middle Road, Stanton St John. Oxford Scribes workshop aimed primarily at beginners but anyone interested in improving their spacing of hand drawn lettering is welcome. We will examine both historical and modern examples of Roman alphabets, from the Trajan column to Cresci and other Italian letterers, to Johnston, Gill, and Kindersley. We will study serifs, and learn how to draw letters that are not mathematically constructed and will be beautifully spaced. If time allows we will continue with a pen, constructing Versal capitals, which follow the proportions of the Roman Monumental alphabet closely and are useful as initials and headings to scripts. See [oxfordscribes.co.uk](http://oxfordscribes.co.uk) 10am. £25 members, £35 non-members.

### SUNDAY

**Andy's Quiz Night:** The Windrush Club, 106 High Street, Witney. 8pm. £2 per person. 01993 702207.

**Bytomic Taekwondo Classes:** Brookside Primary School, Bucknell Road, Bicester. 5pm. 01844 281 888.

**Second Lease Walks:** Woodford Way Car Park, Woodford Way, Witney. Eight-miles taking in Oxford, Wolvercote, Cutteslowe and central Oxford. Contact walks organiser if you intend to join us, as we intend using the bus the S1 from Witney Market Square leaving at 9.40am. Free. 01993 774500.

**Spinning and Weaving:** Earth Trust, Little Wittenham. Discover the world of spinning and weaving. Learn about its history, the different breeds of sheep and their wool and preparing the fleece in this workshop before trying out different methods of spinning. See [earthtrust.org.uk/whatson](http://earthtrust.org.uk/whatson) 10am. £75. 01865 407792.

**Quiz Night:** The Bull Inn, The Bull Inn, Launton. 8pm. 01869 248158.

### MONDAY

**Bingo:** The Seacourt Bridge, West way, Botley. 2pm. £3. 01865 243636.

**Beginner korfbal sessions:** Rye St Antony School, Franklin Road, Headington. Korfbal is a mixed team sport with similarities to basketball, netball and handball for adult players of all ages. 6.30pm. Free (first four sessions).

**Life in the East End, a story of a Fancy Box Cutter:** Long Furlong Community Centre, Boulter Drive (off Dunmore Road), Abingdon. This presentation covers the social, working and leisure life of the people in the East End of London together with the family history of Henry Charles Collisson, the presenter's grandfather. 7.15pm. £2 for non-members.

**Masons Apron Northwest Morris:** Recreation Hall, Main Street, Long Hanborough. Masons Apron Ladies Northwest Morris winter practice season. 8.15pm. £5 annual fee plus £2 per week. 01993 200717.

**Morris Dancing in Quarry:** The Mason's Arms, Quarry School Place, Headington Quarry, Headington. 8pm. Free. 01865 774718.

**Women's Self Defence and Fitness Class:** The Pavilion, Roosevelt Road, Long Hanborough. Ages from 13 upwards. 8pm. £5. 07834 022463.

**Yoga Class:** The Clifton Centre,

**To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at [thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events](http://thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events)**

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Ashdene Road, Bicester. 9.30am. 07917 453224.

### TUESDAY

**Aphasia drop-in session – Oxford:**

North Oxford Association Community Centre (NOA), Diamond Place, Summertown, Oxford. Aphasia is a communication disability usually occurring after stroke or brain injury. If you have aphasia you might have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, using numbers or understanding information. Meet others over a cup of coffee or tea. The group is run by people who have communication disabilities. Carers, relatives and friends are welcome to attend. 2.30pm. Free. 01865 604 329.

**Discovering Watercolour:** Vale & Downland Museum, Church Street, Wantage. With artist Vicky Vergou. Six-week course (no session on Feb 14) 10am. £60 for course. 01235 771447.

**Six Stitches in Six Weeks:** Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage. Anne Griffiths embroidery classes. £40 for all six classes, payment is required in advance. Please bring with you needle, scissors, embroidery thread & calico. 10am. £40 for all six classes. 01235 771447.

**Still Life Drawing:** Vale & Downland Museum, Church Street, Wantage. With artist Vicky Vergou. 11.45am. £54 for course. 01235 771447.

**The Big Lunchtime Sing:** Museum of Oxford, Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford. Fun singing sessions for everyone. Learn beautiful songs from all over the world. No experience required, no need to read music, everything is taught by ear. 12.30pm. £5 per session. 01865 252334.

**Yoga Class:** The Clifton Centre, Ashdene Road, Bicester. 6.15pm. 07917 453224.

**Yoga for those that think they can't do yoga:** Methodist Church, West Street, Chipping Norton. 7.30pm. £12 per class. 01993 831032.

### WEDNESDAY

**Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers:** North Lodge University Parks, Oxford. A leisurely four-mile walk around some of Oxford's parks and meadows finishing at St Aldate's. Optional pub stop at the end. 10.30am. Free. 01865 460469.

**Cheney Over 50s Club:** Cheney School Community Hall, Cheney Lane, Headington. San Francisco, a talk by John Payne. 2.30pm. £2.50.

**Cowley Table Tennis – Open to All:** Temple Cowley United Reformed Church, Oxford Road, Cowley. 8pm. £2 per hour or £3 full session, under-16s £1. 01865 395210.

**Grove RFC Ladies Rugby:** Grove RFC, Recreation Lane, Grove. 7pm. Annual membership £70 after three free sessions. 07970 292322.

**How to Achieve a Low Carbon Future:** St Ethelwold's House, 30 East St Helen Street, Abingdon. Abingdon Carbon Cutters present an interactive session with Richard Clarke, whose new book, *Predicting the Price of Carbon*, is being noticed in Government circles. We will also use the online interactive tool developed by the late David MacKay, author of *Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air*, to develop our own ideas about the best pathway to a low-carbon future. 7.30pm. Free but £3 donation welcome. 01235 533278.

**Paintings of Hieronymus Bosch:**

Trinity Church, Conduit Road, Abingdon. Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts Society. With NADFAS accredited lecturer Valerie Woodgate. 2pm. 01235 523370.

**Pregnancy Yoga – four-week course:** The Clifton Centre, Ashdene Road, Bicester. Suitable from 14 weeks. Book in advance. 7.30pm. £40. 07917 453224.

**Witney Bytomic Taekwondo Classes:** Wood Green School, Woodstock Road, Witney. 7pm. Monthly fees apply. 01844 281888.

## Music

### THURSDAY

**Burton Taylor Studio, Gloucester Street, Oxford:** Oxford Jazz Masters Series. George Haslam saxophone, clarinet, tarogato, Richard Leigh Harris piano and Steve Kershaw double bass. With special guest Simple Harmonic Motion playing original instrumental music in the new age/ contemporary classical genre. £10/£8. 8pm. 01865 305305.

**Ashmolean Rooftop Restaurant, Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street, Oxford:** Live Jazz. 7-9pm. Free.

### FRIDAY

**Angel, Market Place, Witney:** Glam Resurrection. Male duo. Free. 9pm. 01993 703238.

**General Foods Club, Spiceball Park, Banbury:** Joe Holic. 8.30pm. 01295 252852.

**The Methodist Church, High Street, Witney:** Witney Winter Concert – James Noble, clarinet and Simon Callaghan, piano. Music by Finzi, Mozart, Bliss, Poulenc, Lutoslawski, Ravel and Saint-Saëns. £12 (£11 seniors, £1 under-19). 7.30pm. 01993 702296.

**The North Wall, South Parade, Oxford:** George Monbiot & Ewan McLennan. The celebrated columnist and political/environmental campaigner George Monbiot joins forces with leading folk singer Ewan McLennan for a unique collaboration in words and music. £16 (concession £13, members £10). 8pm. 01865 319450.

**The White House, Abingdon Road, Oxford:** Oxford Folk Club theme night (disaster). £2. 8.30pm. 01865 768128.

**The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford:** Last Rites, Lest We Forget, Raised By Hypocrites, Repercussions Of Yesterday. Hard rock and heavy metal. 7pm. £7.

**The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford:** Old Ernie, Brown Glove, Desmond Chancer & The Long Memories, Rayzo. Grunge and goth cabaret. 7.30pm. £5.

### SATURDAY

**Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, St Hilda's College, Oxford:** Jonathan Powell (piano): Beethoven, Liszt, Chopin and Alkan. Gallery £15, stalls £12, students £12/£5. 7.30pm. 01865 286660.

**The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford:** Nick Cope's Song Book. Music gigs for children and families. £5/£3. 10.30am. 01865 790050.

**Tiddy Hall, Shipton Road, Ascott-under-Wychwood:** Steve Knightley. Wychwood Folk Club. English singer,

songwriter and acoustic musician. £16 in advance, £18 on the door. 8pm. 01993 831427.

**The Library Pub, 182 Cowley Road, Oxford:** Generacion Suicida, Scrap Brain, Cowley Chainsaws. Punk. 8pm. Free.

**The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford:** Silk Road, Crimson Tusk, Get Loose. EP launch for local rockers. 8pm.

### SUNDAY

**The Half Moon, 18 St Clements, Oxford:** Folk Night. A mix of Irish folk and other genres led by Mick Henry. Open session, all welcome. 9pm. Free.

**The Oxford Wine Café, South Parade, Summetown:** The Milvertons. Jazz. Piano, vocals, guitar and bass. 6.30-9pm. Free.

**The Nag's Head, The Bridge, Abingdon:** The Claire Jones Ensemble. Jazz. 5pm. Free.

### MONDAY

**The Harcourt Arms, Cranham Terrace, Jericho:** Oxford Classic Power Trio. 7.30-10pm. £5.

### TUESDAY

**The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford:** Beth Rowley. Brit-nominated soulful singer-songwriter. 7pm. £12.

### WEDNESDAY

**The Talk House, Stanton St John:** Jazz with vocalist Lily Dior, Tim Laphorn on piano, Nathan Allen on drums and Tim Dawes, double bass. 8.30-11pm. Free.

**The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford:** The Cactus Blossoms. Two brothers from St Paul, Minnesota. 7.30pm. £10 adv, £12 on the night.

**The Bear Inn, 6 Alfred Street, Oxford:** Dan Rawle. Acoustic solo artist with a hint of Mayhen. 9-11.15pm. Free.

## Theatre

**The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford:** Jan 14, Tom Allen, Marlon Davis, Ellie Taylor, Paul Thorne. Glee comedy. Live stand-up comedy in new venue for 2017. 7pm. £15.95, £10 (student).

**Burton Taylor Studio, Beaumont Street, Oxford:** Until Jan 13, Joz Norris & Marney Godden. Comedy duo. 7.30pm. £10. Jan 14, *Dancing Bear, Dancing Bear*. 7.30pm. £10. 01865 305305.

**Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford:** Jan 12, *An Evening with Pam Ayres*. 7.30pm. £24. Jan 13, *Showstopper!* New musical comedy is created from scratch at each performance as audience suggestions are transformed on the spot into an all-singing, all-dancing production. 8pm. £16. Jan 14, Miles Jupp. Stand-up comedy. 7.30pm. £18.50. Jan 18, *Tangomotion*. 7.30pm. £11.50-£22. 01865 305305.

**New Theatre, George Street, Oxford:** Until Jan 14, *The Commitments*. 7.30pm. £17.90-£55.40 plus £2.85 transaction fee. Jan 15-16, *Jack Whitehall: At Large*. 4pm and 8pm. £29.65-£35.15 plus £2.85 transaction fee. 0844 871 7615.

**The North Wall Arts Centre, South Parade, Summertown:** Jan 14, *Pat-a-Cake Baby*. Long Nose Puppets with a show based on the book by Joyce Dunbar and illustrated by Polly Dunbar. 2pm. £8 (concessions £6). 01865 766266.

**Banbury Town Hall, Bridge Street, Banbury:** Until Jan 15, *Treasure Island*. Cherwell Theatre Company. 7.30pm. Adults £10, concessions £8, family £32.

**Corn Exchange, Market Place, Wallingford:** Jan 13-28, *The Pied Piper*. Wallingford's annual pantomime. 7pm, matinees on Saturdays. £12/£10/£6. 01491 825000.







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## New Year, new you... why not re-train as a social worker?

THE start of a new year gets everyone feeling more reflective than a glitter ball in a torch factory.

Questions abound. Am I in the right job? Am I making a difference? Why does Marmite exist?

Well, if you're caring by nature but your current job doesn't satisfy your urge to help people, this is the perfect time to consider a change.

The role of a social worker is to work with individuals, families and groups to improve their lives.

Often those who require help are at their lowest ebb or are vulnerable because of addiction or illness.

One day you could be working with an adopted person to help

trace their birth family, the next assisting someone to rebuild their life after a long stay in hospital.

There's one constant you can be sure of though: social work is never dull.

Equally, there are few things as satisfying as helping people change their lives for the better.

Social workers are also gatekeepers to a variety of services. They can help individuals claim benefits, access legal advice and navigate the maze of local authority departments.

They can also arrange hospital treatment or services such as home care assistance.

If you're keen, but still feeling nervous about how you might fit into a brand new role, it's helpful

to know many people enter social work after a career elsewhere.

This is a field that attracts a whole range of people of all ages and from many different backgrounds. They all have one thing in common, however – a passion to help others.

To work as a registered social worker you must complete an approved degree. If you already have a degree in another subject you can study for a post-graduate qualification.

Just as important, life experience or volunteering will make you a compelling candidate for any course or position.

Salaries start at between £23,000 and £25,000 for a new graduate. This rises quickly to £29,000 or more in the first few

years, depending on the field.

You can find yourself working with children and families, those with addiction issues, the elderly or individuals with a mental health diagnosis.

This means empathy and communication skills are naturally great personal attributes to bring to the job.

Be warned: the work can be demanding, and occasionally upsetting, so perseverance and a rhino-thick skin are also good qualities to have.

The administrative side of the job means planning and organisation skills are essential to get the best for your clients.

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# MARTIN&CO

## SALES

Lettings • Sales • Investment



**Beech House**  
50% SHARED OWNERSHIP with potential to purchase 100% An immaculately presented 2 bedroom ground floor apartment situated within walking distance to Banbury town center. The property comprises of entrance hall, lounge/diner, bathroom, storage cupboard, kitchen, two bedrooms and 1 allocated parking space.  
**Asking Price Of £87,500**



**Kings Way**  
A spacious 4 bedroom semi detached home situated in the south of Banbury. The property comprises entrance hall, lounge, dining room, recently fitted kitchen diner and cloak room. Upstairs there are four generous bedrooms with ensuite bathroom to the master and separate family bathroom. Outside benefits from ample off road parking, garage, front and rear gardens. IN THE REAR GARDEN THERE IS A BRICK BUILT UNIT IDEAL FOR AN ANNEX CONVERSION OR HOME OFFICE  
**Asking Price Of £320,000**



**Bedford Close**  
Martin & Co Banbury are please to present this excellent one bedroom house situated in a fantastic location within Banbury. This would make an ideal investment or the perfect first time home. Call today to book your viewing 01295 701773  
**Asking Price Of £160,000**



**The Rockies**  
Nestled on the fringes of the pretty hamlet of Fencott, not far from the banks of the River Ray, is The Rockies, a picture perfect thatched cottage that is believed to date back to the 1650s. The Rockies is a grade 2 listed detached home blending timeless character with up to date conveniences.  
**Asking Price Of £850,000**



**Ivy Cottage**  
A new to the market spacious two bedroom cottage situated in the heart of the village of North Newington. There is a separate kitchen; good size lounge with all original features. Upstairs there are two bedrooms and a family size bathroom. Parking is on road. The property also benefits from a picturesque garden. Situated with easy access for Banbury and Bloxham. Walking distance to the local primary school. EPC Rating G  
**£250,000**





# MARTIN&CO

## LETTINGS

Lettings • Sales • Investment



**15 Ashmead Road**

A super three bedroom house in Hanwell Fields with driveway parking; a garage and a rear enclosed garden. The kitchen is fully fitted with dishwasher; washing machine and fridge freezer. Available unfurnished.

**£1,050**



**Elton Road**

We are pleased to present this three bedroom property, with garden and garage in the popular area of Cherwell Heights, Banbury.

**£1,025**



**Cherwell Wharf**

We are pleased to present this spacious three bedroom three storey town house situated overlooking the canal and within walking distance to the town centre and train station.

**£925**



**flat 2 Dorita House**

Martin & Co are pleased to offer this new to the market spacious one bedroom flat available within walking distance to the town centre and train station. The property comprises entrance hall, living room, kitchen, bedroom and separate bathroom. It is unfurnished, neutrally decorated throughout. The property benefits from allocated parking. EPC rating D

**£595**



**9 Butchers Row**

Martin & Co are pleased to present a new to the market three bedroom apartment in the town centre with allocated parking. The property comprises good size kitchen; living room; three bedrooms; bathroom with bath and shower. Available unfurnished. Conveniently situated within walking distance to the town centre and train station. EPC Rating: C

**£825**



**114 Broughton Road**

We are pleased to present a new to the market, two bedroom refurbished end of terrace property with enclosed rear garden. Located with close proximity to the town center and walking distance to the train station.

**£875**



**Castle Street**

We are pleased to present a three bedroom property conveniently situated within walking distance to the town centre and train station.

**£875**



**Padbury Drive**

Martin & Co are pleased to present, this spacious two bedroom flat with close proximity to both Banbury town centre and train station. The spacious living accommodation comprises; two double bedrooms, master bedroom with ensuite bathroom, kitchen, living room and second bathroom with bath and shower. This property benefits from allocated parking, and is available unfurnished.

**£775**



**The Camellias**

We are pleased to present a new to the market two bedroom spacious semi detached house conveniently situated within Hardwick.

**£795**



**Enhance Court**

Martin & Co are pleased to present a new to the market one bedroom stunning apartment situated conveniently in the town centre near to Banbury Cross. The property comprises: an open plan kitchen and living area; good size double bedroom; bathroom with bath and shower. EPC Rating: D

**£725**



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**Middleton Cheney** £425,000  
VILLAGE LOCATION

- Bovis Built 2014
- Five Bedrooms
- Two En-suite
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen/Dining Room



**Banbury** Guide Price £390,000  
SMALL DEVELOPMENT

- Executive Detached
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- Master Bedroom En-Suite
- Three Further Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms



**Greatworth** £350,000  
SOUGHT AFTER VILLAGE

- Detached
- Four Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room
- Garage and Driveway



**Banbury** £269,500  
BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED

- Four Bedrooms
- Large Kitchen/Diner
- Lounge
- Refurbished throughout
- Garage and Driveway



**Banbury** £259,950  
CLOSE TO PEOPLES PARK

- Period Property
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Receptions
- Large Garden
- Desirable Location



**Thorpe Mandeville** £235,000  
GARDENERS DREAM

- Stone Cottage
- Village Location
- Two Bedrooms
- Good Gardens



**Banbury** Offers in Excess £195,000  
A FANTASTIC INVESTMENT

- Town Centre
- Period Townhouse
- Three Bedrooms
- Fully refurbished



**Banbury** £167,500  
GROUND FLOOR

- Ground Floor
- En-Suite
- Further Double
- Bedroom
- Kitchen
- Lounge



**Banbury** £1,200  
LUXURY LIVING within a stones throw of the hospital.

- Three Bedroom Detached
- Newly Refurbished
- Throughout
- New Kitchen/Diner
- New Bathroom



**Moreton Pinkey** £1,000  
Village Location

- No Onward Chain
- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Family Room
- Village Location
- Master Bedroom En-suite



**Bodcote** £950  
MORE REQUIRED

- Chalet Bungalow
- Three Bedrooms
- Immaculately Presented
- Off Road Parking



**Banbury** £825  
MORE REQUIRED

- Two Bedroom
- Immaculate Condition
- Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen
- Long Term



**Banbury** £695  
MORE REQUIRED

- Kitchen Area
- Conservatory
- Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Allocated Parking



**Temple Herdewyke** £675  
Available Now

- 2 double bedrooms
- Laminate flooring
- Log burner
- Allocated parking
- Immaculate
- Pets considered



**Milcombe** £825  
Available 1st November

- Village Location
- End Terrace
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Open Plan living
- Garden



**Banbury** £650  
MORE REQUIRED

- Period Terrace House
- One Double Bedroom
- Good Size Lounge
- Bathroom
- Off Road Parking

**01295 231 649**

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PER MONTH DEPOSIT

**SAVE £896**

OFF LIST PRICE

**NOW £11,524**

MOKKA X ACTIVE

**£219 + £99**

PER MONTH DEPOSIT

**SAVE £2,755**

OFF LIST PRICE

**NOW £16,950**

VIVA

**£99 + £99**

PER MONTH DEPOSIT

**SAVE £1,002**

OFF LIST PRICE

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OFF LIST PRICE

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**CORSA SXi  
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+ £119  
DEPOSIT**



**ASTRA SRI  
2016**

**£169  
PER MONTH  
+ £99  
DEPOSIT**



**INSIGNIA SRI  
2015**

**£179  
PER MONTH  
+ £179  
DEPOSIT**

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**PRE-REGISTERED MOKKA 1.6 EXCLUSIV**

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**4 YEAR  
WARRANTY**

**VIVARO VAN L1 H1 1.6 CDTi 95PS**

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\*Mokka X on the road price £19,705 - Eden Offer Price £16,950 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £16,851 - 48 monthly payments of £219 - Optional final payment £5,635 - Representative APR 3.7% - total amount payable £18,426 based on 5,000 miles per year. Astra 14 SRI on the road price £18,515 - Eden Offer Price £15,737 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £15,638 - 48 monthly payments of £199 - Optional final payment £6,086 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £15,737 - based on 6,000 miles per year. Corsa Energy on the road price £12,945 - Eden Offer Price £11,726 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £11,627 - 49 monthly payments of £139 - Optional final payment £4,816 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £11,726 - based on 6,000 miles per year. Adam 1.2 Jam on the road price £12,420 - Eden Offer Price £11,524 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £11,425 - 48 monthly payments of £169 - Optional final payment £3,435 - Representative APR 3.7% - total amount payable £12,507 - based on 5,000 miles per year. Viva 1.0 SE on the road price £8,965 - Eden Offer Price £7,963 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £7,864 - 48 monthly payments of £99 - Optional final payment £3,112 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £7,963 - based on 6,000 miles per year. This promotion is available on the above models and is available on Eden Vauxhall stock only. Free mats subject to availability. MOTs to be carried out only at Eden service centres. Specification and colour may vary on used cars available. 2014 Corsa SXi - Eden Offer Price £7,259 - Customer Deposit £119 - Total amount of credit £7,140 - 60 monthly payments of £119 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £7,395 on a hire purchase agreement. 2016 Astra SRI 14 - Eden Offer Price £13,398 - Customer Deposit £99 - Total amount of credit £13,299 - 48 monthly payments of £169 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £13,398 on a personal contract purchase agreement based on 6,000 miles per year. 2015 Insignia SRI - Eden Offer Price £10,919 - Customer Deposit £179 - Total amount of credit £10,740 - 60 monthly payments of £179 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £10,919 on a hire purchase agreement. 2013 Zafira Tourer (Diesel Exclusiv) - Eden Offer Price £10,309 - Customer Deposit £169 - Total amount of credit £10,140 - 60 monthly payments of £169 - Representative APR 0% - total amount payable £10,309 on a hire purchase agreement. Finance is subject to status, terms and conditions apply. Applicant must be 18 years or over. Finance by Black Horse Finance St William House Tresillian Terrace Cardiff CF10 5BH. Excess mileage will be charged on the above vehicles. These offers supersede any other offer and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. For further details, please contact your local Eden branch.



Travel

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# 2017 European River Cruises by air

There really are few holidays more relaxing and enjoyable than those spent lazily drifting through some of Europe's most enticing scenery and visiting some of its most fascinating cities on board a river cruise vessel – this is life aboard much-loved *Olympia* and her 'sister', beautifully appointed *Sound of Music*.

*Flying from 26 airports across the country! Rail & Coach packages also available.*



Four-star Superior *Sound of Music*



Joining us in 2017 for the first time, sleek *Sound of Music* is a little larger than her fleet-mate, offering a deluxe river cruise experience to some 122 passengers. The ship's cabins are generously proportioned, some with 'French balconies', and her large, airy forward lounge, aft restaurant and split-level sun deck give her a sense of spaciousness. Additional touches include complimentary Wi-Fi, an ice-maker and coffee-station, as well as complimentary table water at mealtimes.

Cruise Programme	Days	2017 Departure Dates	Price from
Dutch Highlights & Belgium	8	3 Apr	£1,089
Jewels of the Rhine	8	1, 8, 29 May, 1, 22 Oct	£1,149
Rhine, Strasbourg & Heidelberg	8	5 Jun, 11, 24 Sep	£1,279
Beautiful Valleys of the Rhine & Moselle	7	12 Jun, 18 Sep	£1,115
Delights of the Danube	8	20, 27 Jul	£1,309
The Danube, Romantic Road & Rhine	12	17 Aug	£1,869



Three-star Superior *Olympia*



Much-loved *Olympia* is a delightfully traditional, intimate vessel carrying some 96 passengers in comfort and style. Regularly refitted and refurbished, with a recent update to the reception, bar/lounge and cabins, the ship offers accommodation in bright, modern cabins, a comfortable lounge with picture windows and a bar, and a fine restaurant. A partially covered observation deck brings chances to make the most of fine days.

Cruise Programme	Days	2017 Departure Dates	Price from
Amsterdam & Bulbfields Spectacular	4	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17 Apr	£499
Springtime Holland & the Bulbfields	6	20, 25, 30 Apr	£709
Dutch Waterways & the Rhine	7	5 May	£829
Romantic Rhine Cruise to Switzerland	9	11, 19, 27 May, 19 Jun, 15 Jul, 4, 12 Aug, 6 Oct	£1,119
The Rhine in Flames	8	27 Jun	£1,119
Cruise the Glorious Rhine	6	4 Jun, 4 Jul, 14, 19 Oct	£819
The Rhine & the Black Forest	6	9, 14 Jun	£889
The Rhine & Moselle	7	9, 23, 29 Jul	£979
Castles & Vineyards Four Rivers	7	20 Aug, 30 Sep	£969
Bavaria & a Taste of the Danube	8	26 Aug, 23 Sep	£1,229
Danube Cruise to Vienna & Budapest	8	2, 9, 16 Sep	£1,219

Every River Cruise includes:

- Full-board including breakfast, lunch and dinner, afternoon tea, cake and evening snacks
- On-board evening entertainment
- On-board English commentary
- Welcome Cocktail Party
- Gala Farewell Dinner on longer duration cruises

- Porterage on and off the ship
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